



Applicant's attorney notes that each of the above-listed patents and patent publications was cited in a European Search Report issued in connection with applicant's corresponding application (i.e., EP01810968).

The attached copy of the European Search Report provides an indication as to the relevance of the references listed therein. More particularly, the European Search Report assigns a category "A" designation (i.e., a document defining the technological background) to all of the references cited. It also assigns a category "P" designation (i.e., an intermediate document) to European Patent Publication No. 1 101 426 A. In such circumstances, additional comments concerning the relevance of the foregoing patents and patent publications are considered unnecessary. In addition, applicant's attorney notes that an English-language translation of International Patent Publication No. WO 00/21416 A is not presently available. However, applicant will provide the United States Patent and Trademark Office with an appropriate English-language translation upon the Examiner's request for same.

In order to facilitate the Examiner's citation of the patents and patent publications listed above, applicant's attorney has completed United States Patent and Trademark Office Form PTO-1449. The completed Form is attached hereto for the Examiner's convenience.

Although this Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted after mailing of a first Office Action on the merits and before a final Office Action, each item of information contained in this Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. In the foregoing circumstances, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.97(c)(1) and (e)(1), it is believed that no fees are due in connection with the submission of this Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. However, if any such fees are due, including extension and petition fees, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge them to Deposit Account No. 501402.

Respectfully Submitted,

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